

Statement on Signing Legislation on Witness Retaliation, Witness Tampering, and Jury Tampering *October 1, 1996*

Today I am pleased to sign H.R. 3120, legislation to protect the integrity of our legal system and ensure the safety of our families.

The United States is a nation of laws. We have always been committed to making our legal system the best, the most effective, and the fairest in the world.

In the last 3½ years, we have worked hard to live up to that fundamental obligation—putting more police on the street; getting gangs and guns and drugs off the street; introducing tougher penalties for a wide range of crimes; appointing more judges with the American Bar Association's top rating than any administration in 20 years.

Today we take an important new step. This legislation dramatically increases the punishment for those who would influence, tamper with, or retaliate against witnesses, jurors, and court officers in Federal criminal cases.

Let me be very clear: The integrity of our legal system depends on the integrity of our courts. And the integrity of our courts depends on individual citizens serving as impartial jurors—free from intimidation or temptation. We must see to it that juries decide cases based only on evidence presented in the courtroom. Our prosecutors must have a fair chance to make their case. Our fight against crime is too important, our system of justice too sacred, the security of our people too vital, for justice to be denied because a jury has been tampered with.

With this legislation, we send a simple message to those who would abuse our system of justice: When the integrity of our laws and the safety our people are at stake, we will take no chances.

NOTE: H.R. 3120, approved October 1, was assigned Public Law No. 104-214.

Statement on Signing the Carjacking Correction Act of 1996 *October 1, 1996*

Today I am proud to sign the Carjacking Correction Act of 1996. This legislation will increase the security of all Americans—particularly women.

Carjacking is a terrible crime. It is punishable under Federal law. In cases where carjackers have inflicted “serious bodily injury” on their victims, this tough law gets even tougher—the maximum sentence may be increased from 15 to 25 years.

Unfortunately, in a May 21, 1996, decision, in the case of *United States v. Rivera*, a panel on the First Circuit Court of Appeals held that a rape that took place during a carjacking did not constitute a “serious bodily injury.”

That's plain wrong, and the legislation I am signing today will prevent this mistake from ever happening again. This legislation says clearly: Sexual assault causes serious bodily injury.

Carjackers who rape their victims will meet with nothing less than the full force of the law.

This legislation builds on the work we have already done to make America safer for women. For too long, the threat of violence to women was not taken seriously enough. As American women were forced to look over their shoulders, society looked the other way.

So we took action. We passed the Violence Against Women Act, established a national registry of sex offenders, created a national 24-hour domestic violence hotline, and made “three strikes and you're out” the law of the land. We passed Megan's Law—and now States must tell communities whether a dangerous sexual predator is in their midst. We gave America the Brady bill—keeping guns out of the hands of 60,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers.

Last week I signed into law a strong, new Federal law to stop stalkers. Yesterday I signed

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legislation to extend the Brady bill to keep guns away from people with a history of domestic violence.

I want to thank Representative Conyers for his hard work on this bill. And I want to add that this legislation is proof of the progress we can make for the American people when we

put politics aside and join with each other in common cause. Together, with this bill, we have done much to give our families the safety and security they deserve.

NOTE: H.R. 3676, approved October 1, was assigned Public Law No. 104-217.

Statement on Signing Legislation Conferring Honorary United States Citizenship on Mother Teresa *October 1, 1996*

Today I am delighted to sign a resolution conferring honorary United States citizenship on Mother Teresa.

In 1950, Mother Teresa founded the Missionaries of Charity. Since then, she has brought hope and love into the lives of millions of orphaned and abandoned children the world over. She has nursed the sick, cared for the poor, and shown us, through concrete actions, how we can make real our dreams for a just and good society.

To be an American citizen is to share certain fundamental values: That we have a duty to

help others live up to their God-given promise, that we have a responsibility to build up and reinforce the bonds of community, that we have an obligation to extend our hands to those who cannot always help themselves.

By this measure, Mother Teresa is already an American citizen. I am proud to make it official.

NOTE: H.J. Res. 191, approved October 1, was assigned Public Law No. 104-218.

Message to the Senate Transmitting Amendments to the Convention on the International Maritime Organization *October 1, 1996*

To the Senate of the United States:

I transmit herewith, for the advice and consent of the Senate to acceptance, amendments to the Convention on the International Maritime Organization, signed at Geneva, March 6, 1948 (the IMO Convention). The amendments were adopted on November 7, 1991, and November 4, 1993, by the Assembly of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) at its seventeenth and eighteenth sessions. I also transmit, for the information of the Senate, the report of the Department of State describing the amendments, their purpose and effect.

The United States is the world's largest user of international shipping. These amendments strengthen the International Maritime Organization's capability to facilitate international mari-

time traffic and to carry out its activities in developing strong maritime safety and environmental protection standards and regulations. The IMO's policies and maritime standards largely reflect our own. The United States pays less than 5 percent of the assessed contributions to the IMO.

The 1991 amendments institutionalize the Facilitation Committee as one of the IMO's standing committees. The Facilitation Committee was created to streamline the procedures for the arrival, stay and departure of ships, cargo and persons in international ports. This committee effectively contributes to greater efficiencies and profits for the U.S. maritime sector, while assisting U.S. law enforcement agencies' efforts to